

How Do Great Parties Happen? It's Not Just Magic!

Introduction

Do you love parties? Would you like to be an expert party planner? A really fabulous hostess? Follow along as Vanessa and Isabella learn some killer tips and tricks from their moms!

The Party Planning Checklist

Start with a basic list of the things that are super important for any successful event. When Nessie and Bella decided to have a Christmas party, this is the list that their moms gave them:

1. TYPE
2. THEME OR PURPOSE
3. DETAILS (DATE, TIME, LOCATION)
4. GUESTS
5. INVITATIONS
6. DECORATIONS
7. FOOD AND DRINK
8. ACTIVITIES
9. PARTY FAVORS
10. BUDGET

Understanding the Checklist

1. Type

What type of party are you planning? Is it a holiday party or a going-away party for a friend? Is it a birthday party?

2. Theme or Purpose

The theme or purpose of your party will impact almost every other aspect of your planning. The theme might be a specific holiday (a Halloween party, or a summer celebration). You might decide on a day-at-the-spa theme for a birthday party, or a movie night for a sleepover. A theme can be as simple as deciding on using blue and white for all the decorations at a party, including your outfit. Picking a theme can be a lot of fun!

3. Details

Setting the details as soon as possible is important. Work with your parents to choose a date and time and location that fit the family's schedule.

4. Guests

The number of guests depends in part on the type of party you are planning, the location, and your budget.

5. Invitations

Invitations announce not just the party details, but the theme of your party. They make it official. Make them count!

6. Decorations

Plan your decorations around your theme and any specific color scheme you have decided on. Sometimes just one outstanding decorative item -- like a balloon arch where everyone can take pictures -- is a huge hit.

7. Food and Drink

This depends a lot on the type of party you are having. You might be having an afternoon birthday party and serving cake and ice cream, or you might be planning

a late afternoon karaoke party with pizza and dessert. You will want to work closely with your parents on this because food and beverage costs can add up quickly. When you are older and have graduated high school, you and your friends will plan parties on your own. You will suddenly find you are doing a lot of "pot luck" parties, where everyone brings a dish and shares it. It's a budget thing. Fancy food at a party can be really expensive. But there are so many ways around that, and all it takes is a little planning and creativity!

8. Activities

What are your guests going to do when they get there? Swim? Sing? Make something? Watch a movie? You are in charge!

9. Party Favors

A party favor can be anything from a pretty flower tied with a ribbon or a huge shopping bag filled with clothing and purses and electronics (a "swag bag"). You are giving your guest something to remember your party by.

10. Budget

This is a big item. Most children do not know what a budget is, because they don't have to know. But as you mature and move into the adult world, it is an important thing to know. A budget is simply the amount of money available to spend on your party (or anything else in life). Planning and hosting a party can be a wonderful way for the adults in your life to help you understand how budgeting works.

Learn More

Go to the *Beyond the Pages* tab and read "*Vanessa and Bella Find the Spirit of Christmas*." Follow them as they plan a party with their moms. Work with them as they learn about budgeting when their moms put them in charge of the party favors. And watch as the party comes together!